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Housekeepers' Chat

Thursday, October 23, 1930.

Not for Publication

Subject: "Prepare for Winter." Information, including questions and answers, approved by Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

Bulletins available: "Window Curtaining", "Rabbit Recipes."

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"A good breakfast," said Uncle Ebenezer this morning, "starts the day off right. When I can have baked apples, poached eggs on toast - two poached eggs on toast - and a perfect cup of coffee, I'm an optimist for the next 8 hours. May I have another cup of this delicious coffee, Aunt Sammy?"

I poured another cup of coffee, while Uncle Ebenezer read the morning paper.

"What's this!" said Uncle Ebenezer suddenly. "Why did I ever glance at the woman's page. Makes ~~me~~ feel decidedly uncomfortable -- de-cid-ed-ly uncomfortable!"

"What is it?" I asked.

"Never mind," said Uncle Ebenezer, "You'll find it, sooner or later. By the way, did I promise to take the awnings down this week?"

"Yes," I said, "and last week you made the same promise. You were to take down the awnings, remove the screens, look at the furnace, and do a few other duties before winter hits us with his chilling blast."

"I remember," said Uncle Ebenezer. "Now I remember. I'll take the awnings down tonight, Aunt Sammy. One of the joys of being a house-husband is that one can take the awnings down every fall, and remove the screens. But one should never read the woman's page of the newspaper. It upsets one's peace of mind."

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After Uncle Ebenezer left, I picked up the paper, and turned to the homemakers' page.

"In preparing for winter," I read, "awnings should be taken down, brushed, and wrapped separately in heavy paper, and stored for the winter in a dry place where there will be no danger of mildew. When screens are removed they may be brushed either with oil or with a thin coat of paint, to prevent rusting. If each screen is carefully marked with a number corresponding to the number of the window in which it belongs, there will be less confusion next spring."

A good point, that. I hope Uncle Ebenezer will remember to mark the screens and the windows, with corresponding numbers. In fact I think I'd better superintend the removal of the screens this evening, and have a good lead pencil in my pocket.

The next point was about storm windows. "Storm windows or window stripping," I read, "so valuable in preventing drafts and saving fuel, should be put up early enough to keep the house comfortable during even the first cold days."

More valuable advice for house-husbands. The next item was about furnaces. I'm glad Uncle Ebenezer saw this:

"Before cold weather sets in, and furnace fires must be built, give the heating system an inspection, and the care it may need. Chimneys and furnaces need to be cleaned of all soot and ashes, if this was not done in the spring. Any cracks or openings that may have appeared in the chimney should be sealed. The flue passages and smoke pipe of the furnace should also be cleaned of sooty deposits. Wire brushes may be had for this purpose."

Ah! Another thing for me to remember. When I remind Uncle Ebenezer to inspect the furnace, I shall have a wire brush handy.

Well, I didn't intend to spend so much time talking about my own household this morning. Now we'll devote some attention to your affairs.

The first question is from a farmer's wife. She wants information about making sweet cider, on a small scale, for home use. Your question is answered in Farmers' Bulletin No. 1264, "Farm Manufacture of Unfermented Apple Juice."

Second question: "Can you tell me what is the frost-like deposit frequently seen on the inside of glass jars containing shelled pecans, or other nuts?"

Yes, I can tell you. The frost-like deposit on the inside of a glass jar containing shelled nuts is soap. Oh, yes, it is! I didn't believe it either, 'till the mystery was explained to me. The deposit is soap, and it is formed by the action of the acid fat of the nuts, on the alkali of the glass. The soap does not impair the quality of the nuts, but it presents an unsightly appearance, and reacts against the sale of the product.

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The third question is about the new window-curtain bulletin. "Please send me a copy of the bulletin," writes a homemaker. "I am buying curtains for a new house, and I surely do need advice on what kind to buy for each room. I hope that the bulletin tells something about color plans."

It does. The curtain bulletin is chock full of advice about proportion, line, color qualities and color plans. For example, suppose you are curtaining a room on the north -- a room that receives a cool north light. Turn to page 5, and you'll find this expert advice: "For the room that receives a cool north light, you can furnish the necessary brightness by having cream-colored walls, and printed linen or cretonne draperies with orange on a soft, warm, brown background, combined with sheer, orange-colored glass curtains."

If you want a copy of the curtain bulletin, I suggest that you get your order in early, before the supply is exhausted. Just this morning I wanted to mention a certain popular bulletin which is timely right now, but when I called on the printing department, to see how many copies I could get, I was told that the bulletin was out of print. The popular ones go fast.

The next question is a vitamin-question. "Are there any vitamins in sweet potatoes?"

I should say so. Sweet potatoes are a good source of vitamins. Sweet potatoes contain as much Vitamin A as the leafy vegetables. They also contain Vitamin B, and Vitamin C. So give your families lots of Baked Sweet Potatoes, Sweet Potato Pone, Sweet Potato Pie -- all those good-tasting sweet potato dishes.

The last question: "Please tell me how to cook rabbit." Now, that's what I call a comprehensive question. If I started out to tell you all the ways I know of, to cook rabbit -- none of us would get home in time for dinner.

Young rabbits, like young chickens and tender steaks and chops, can be cooked by the quick methods of frying or broiling. The older rabbits need longer, slower cooking. They are excellent served in fricassees, casserole dishes, rabbit pie, croquettes, salad, chop suey, and all the other ways we cook the less tender cuts of meat.

I brought with me this morning a copy of the new leaflet, "Rabbit Recipes." I wish I could distribute a few of these leaflets -- I believe you'd like to try some of the Recipe Lady's directions, for cooking the white-meated, delicately flavored, domestic rabbit. Here's a picture of a broiled young rabbit, with crisp lattice potatoes. What's wrong with this picture? Nothing -- except that it's only a picture.

When you send for the curtain bulletin, maybe you'd like to send for "Rabbit Recipes" too. I'll be glad to send both.

Tomorrow: "Secrets of Salad Making."

